



ASCD® 2014

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Effective educators strive to support the whole child and measure success in terms of students and staff who are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. It is time for national policymakers to embrace this goal by aligning federal education programs into a coherent system that supports each student from early childhood through graduation.

ASCD calls on Congress and the Obama administration to adopt the following recommendations to promote the comprehensive achievement of educators, students, schools, and families.

1. Well-Rounded Education

All students deserve comprehensive and engaging opportunities that prepare them for college and careers and to be active, productive citizens who positively contribute to our communities. A well-rounded education for all students means

- Access to and proficiency in all academic subjects.
- Availability of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or college dual-enrollment courses.
- Public reporting of existing student achievement data in every academic subject at the school, district, and state levels.

2. Conditions for Learning

A strong foundation of support is necessary for students to maximize their potential. Students must receive comprehensive assistance through

- In-school social and emotional learning, mental health services, and counseling to increase their capacity to achieve.
- Meaningful parental, youth, and community engagement.
- High-quality early childhood education.
- Flexible decision-making authority for local school leaders to meet educational goals and mandates.
- The repeal of sequestration and a new federal maintenance of effort requirement to establish a mandatory baseline for federal education funding.

3. Multimetric Accountability

Standardized tests should never be the primary measure of student achievement, educator effectiveness, or school quality. Accountability systems must promote continuous support and improvement and

- Be public and transparent.
- Include a range of subjects beyond English language arts and mathematics.
- Use a variety of measures, including formative assessments, evidence of student learning, and progress toward personal growth objectives.
- Incorporate important nonacademic factors such as measures of school climate, safety, and parental engagement.

4. Developing Educator Effectiveness

Educators are the most important in-school factor affecting student achievement. Thus, effective preparation efforts and ongoing professional development systems for classroom teachers and school leaders must

- Evaluate teachers in only the subjects they teach.
- Provide personalized development that recognizes educators' strengths and enhances their growth.
- Make the necessary investments in time and money to support educators along the entire career continuum.
- Use evaluations based on multiple measures that include observations, peer reviews, and evidence of student learning.